

## **Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year C)**

The liturgy underscores the birth of the Savior in a special way today. The prophet Micah points out that the "ruler in Israel" must be born in Bethlehem to "shepherd his flock" because "he shall be peace." During her visit to Elizabeth, the Virgin Mary continues to be a model of evangelization for all of us, who are called to bring the good news of salvation to our neighbors and friends. As the author of the Letter to the Hebrews proclaims, our sacrifice, united to that of Christ's, is not based on holocausts or vain offerings but on our selfless acceptance of God's will. Community groups that have already begun to celebrate popular Christmas traditions, such as pastorelas (Christmas stories) and aguinaldos (gifts), should share information about Masses and other gatherings so that all who take part in popular piety may feel welcome to also worship together during the Christmas and Epiphany liturgies.

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### **First Reading**

Micah 5:1-4a Out of tiny Bethlehem will come one who is to be ruler over all Israel. "He shall stand firm and shepherd his flock ... he shall be peace."

### **Responsorial Psalm**

Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19

### **Second Reading**

Hebrews 10:5-10 God took no delight in holocausts and sin offerings, even those that fulfilled the law. Rather, God desired Christ. By death, Jesus took away the first covenant to set up the second.

### **Gospel Acclamation**

Luke 1:38

### **Gospel**

Luke 1:39-45 When Mary visited Zechariah's house, Elizabeth greeted her: "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb." When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, "the infant leaped in her womb."

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